

a¹ 11. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said identification is a telephone number of a telephone from which said first inbound call was placed.

18. (Amended) A method for a call center to establish a successful conversation between an agent and a caller when no agent is immediately available to said caller, comprising the steps of:

- a²
- a. after receiving a first inbound call from said caller, automatically assigning and keeping a place for said caller in a waiting queue;
 - b. assigning an identification for said caller and electronically instructing said caller to call back in a time window, of which he will be informed later, to claim his place in the queue;
 - c. disconnecting said inbound call;
 - d. assigning said time window to said caller;
 - e. electronically informing said caller of said time window; and
 - f. upon receiving a second inbound call from said caller in said time window, verifying said identification of said caller and resuming his place in said waiting queue.
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a³ 21. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step e comprises a step of electronically dialing a telephone of said caller and hanging up before said caller answers.

25. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step e is implemented by sending a message through a packet-based network to an internet address of said caller.

A4 26. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step e is implemented by sending a message to a pager of said caller.

27. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step b further comprises the steps of:

automatically assigning an approximate time point to said caller around which said caller will be informed of said time window; and

electronically informing said caller of said approximate time point.

28. (Amended) The method of claim 27 wherein said approximate time is automatically determined on an average waiting time that each caller has to wait in the queue before an agent is available to him.

A5 31. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step b further comprises a step of electronically informing said caller of said identification, and said step f further comprises a step of prompting said caller to provide said identification.

a⁶ 35. (Amended) The method of claim 33 wherein said step c further comprises a step of assigning a time to said caller and informing said caller to call back before said assigned time so as to claim his place in said queue.

a⁷ 40. (Amended) The method of claim 38 wherein said step e further comprises a step of bumping said place of said caller to the top of said queue if said caller calls back within said time window but after a time of his turn in said queue.

a⁸ 42. (Amended) The method of claim 41 wherein said step of reminding comprises a step of electronically dialing a telephone of said caller and hanging up before said caller answers.

a⁹ 46. (Amended) The method of claim 33 further comprising a step of, before said step d, assigning a second telephone number to said caller and instructing said caller to dial said second telephone number to call back, said second telephone number being different from a first telephone number by which said caller made said first inbound call.

47. (Amended) The method of claim 33 further comprising a step of erasing said place of said caller after a conversation is established between an agent and said caller.

CONT
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The following versions of amended claims 11, 18, 21, 25-28, 31, 35, 40, 42, 46 and 47 indicate deletions in brackets and additions in underlined bold type:

11. (Amended) The method of claim 1 wherein said identification is a telephone number of a telephone from which said first inbound call was placed.

18. (Amended) A method for a call center to establish a successful conversation between an agent and a caller when no agent is immediately available to said caller, comprising the steps of:

a. after receiving a first inbound call from said caller, automatically assigning and keeping a place for said caller in a waiting queue;

g. assigning an identification for said caller and [electrically] electronically instructing said caller to call back in a time window, of which he will be informed later, to claim his place in the queue;

h. disconnecting said inbound call;

i. assigning said time window to said caller;

j. [electrically] electronically informing said caller of said time window;

and

k. upon receiving a second inbound call from said caller in said time window, verifying said identification of said caller and resuming his place in said waiting queue.

21. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step [d] e comprises a step of [electrically] **electronically** dialing a telephone of said caller and hanging up before said caller answers.

25. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step [d] e is implemented by sending a message through a packet-based network to an internet address of said caller.

26. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step [d] e is implemented by sending a message to a pager of said caller.

27. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step b further comprises the steps of:

automatically assigning an approximate time point to said caller around which said caller will be informed of said time window; and

[electrically] **electronically** informing said caller of said approximate time point.

28. (Amended) The method of claim 27 wherein said [appropriate] **approximate** time is automatically determined on an average waiting time that each caller has to wait in the queue before an agent is available to him.

31. (Amended) The method of claim 18 wherein said step b further comprises a step of [electrically] electronically informing said caller of said identification, and said step [e] f further comprises a step of prompting said caller to provide said identification.

35. (Amended) The method of claim 33 wherein said step c further [comprising] comprises a step of assigning a time to said caller and informing said caller to call back before said assigned time so as to claim his place in said queue.

40. (Amended) The method of claim 38 wherein said step e further [comprising] comprises a step of bumping said place of said caller to the top of said queue if said caller calls back within said time window but after a time of his turn in said queue.

42. (Amended) The method of claim 41 wherein said step of reminding comprises a step of [electrically] electronically dialing a telephone of said caller and hanging up before said caller answers.

46. (Amended) The method of claim 33 [wherein] further comprising a step of, before said step d, assigning a second telephone number to said caller and instructing said caller to dial said second telephone number to call back, said second telephone number being different from a first telephone number by which said caller made said first inbound call.

47. (Amended) The method of claim 33 [wherein] further comprising a step of erasing said place of said caller after a conversation is established between an agent and said caller.

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Please add new claims 53-60, as follows:

53. (New) A system in a call center for processing an inbound call from a caller, comprising:

a sequence coordinator, arranged to automatically assign and keep a place for said caller in a waiting queue, upon receipt of an inbound call of said caller;

an identifier, arranged to assign an identification to said caller and to verify said identification;

a temporal interval assigner, arranged to assign a time window for said caller within which said caller shall call back to claim his place in said queue;

an informer, arranged to electronically inform said caller of said time window and to instruct him to call back within said time window; and

a place holder, arranged to resume said place of said caller, when said identification of said caller is verified.

54. (New) The system of claim 53 further comprising a temporal interval informer, arranged to electronically remind said caller when said time window begins.

55. (New) The system of claim 53 further comprising an agent availability informer, arranged to electronically remind said caller when an agent is available to said caller.

56. (New) The system of claim 53 wherein said identifier comprises an automatic number identification system that can automatically retrieve a telephone number of an inbound call.

57. (New) The system of claim 53 further comprising a prompter, arranged to electronically prompt said caller to provide said identification upon receiving an inbound call of said caller.

58. (New) An article comprising a computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon which when executed causes a call center to establish a successful connection between an agent and a caller when no agent is immediately available to said caller, by:

- a. after receiving a first inbound call from said caller, automatically assigning and keeping a place for said caller in a waiting queue;
- b. assigning an identification and a time window to said caller within which said caller shall call back to claim said place in said queue;
- c. electronically informing said caller of said time window;
- d. disconnecting said call; and
- e. upon receiving a second inbound call from said caller within said time window, verifying said caller by said identification and resuming said place of said caller in said waiting queue.

59. (New) An article comprising a computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon which when executed causes a call center to establish a successful conversation between an agent and a caller when no agent is immediately available to said caller, by:

- a. after receiving a first inbound call from said caller, automatically assigning and keeping a place for said caller in a waiting queue;
- b. assigning an identification for said caller and electronically instructing said caller to call back in a time window, of which he will be informed later, to claim his place in the queue;
- c. disconnecting said inbound call;
- d. assigning said time window to said caller;
- e. electronically informing said caller of said time window; and
- f. upon receiving a second inbound call from said caller in said time window, verifying said identification of said caller and resuming his place in said waiting queue.

60. (New) An article comprising a computer readable medium having instructions stored thereon which when executed causes a call center to establish a successful conversation between an agent and a caller when no agent is immediately available to said caller, by:

- a. after receiving a first inbound call from said caller, automatically assigning and keeping a place for said caller in a waiting queue;
- b. assigning an identification to said caller;

- c. instructing said caller to call back later;
- d. disconnecting said call; and
- e. upon receiving a second inbound call from said caller, verifying

said caller by said identification and resuming said place of said caller in said waiting queue.